

# Montana Invasive Species Bulletin

*Brought to you by the Montana Invasive Species Advisory Council*

[dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/cadd/MISAC](http://dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/cadd/MISAC)

The Invasive Species Bulletin provides you with all the latest news on invasive species in Montana and the region. Please let us know if you have any suggestions, contributions, questions, corrections, or comments.

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## Montana Mussel Response Team

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**Please join the Montana Mussel Response Team for weekly briefings on Thursdays at 1 pm. The next briefing is scheduled for Thursday, December 8. Call-in information and related materials will be distributed via email prior to the meeting.**

**Please email [MusselResponse@mt.gov](mailto:MusselResponse@mt.gov) to be added to the response list serve to receive briefings and daily updates.**

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### Montana Response Mussel Briefing #1

**Thursday, December 1, 2016**

Last month, aquatic invasive mussel larva was discovered in samples at Tiber Reservoir. Further testing at Tiber confirmed the presence of mussel larvae. Ongoing sampling and testing efforts turned up water samples from Canyon Ferry Reservoir, the Milk River downstream of Nelson Reservoir and the Missouri River upstream of Townsend that were suspect for the mussel larva. Additional samples from suspect water bodies are still being analyzed to provide further confirmation. Those tests results are

expected within the next two weeks. Testing results from water samples collected around the state continue to be analyzed.

On Monday, Gov. Steve Bullock signed an executive order declaring a statewide natural resource emergency for Montana water bodies due to the detection of invasive aquatic mussels at Tiber Reservoir and suspected detections at Canyon Ferry Reservoir and the Milk and Missouri rivers. The governor directed the Montana Invasive Species Advisory Council, Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, and Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks, to form a coordinated Rapid Response Team to immediately respond to the situation.

Aquatic invasive species are a serious threat to Montana's critical infrastructure and economy. The deployment of the multi-agency rapid response team will work quickly to identify and contain existing mussel populations, and prevent future introduction to other water ways. The potential economic, ecological and recreational impacts for Montana and our region must be addressed quickly and every effort must be taken to prevent the additional spread of this threat.

The Montana Mussel Response Team focused this week on actions that we can be doing immediately to respond to the suspect water bodies. Those actions relate to:

- **Defining the extent of the infestation**
  - Expedite the processing of samples taken from water bodies this summer as part of routine veliger sampling
    - The FWP lab has prioritized samples to process internally
    - Additional samples are being sent to lab in Colorado
    - Our expectation is to have all samples processed in two weeks time

- The incident command is working with the Flathead biological station to implement E-DNA sampling on Tiber and Canyon Ferry Reservoirs to help us identify the species and locate possible adult mussel populations
- **Restricting potential spread to uninfested water bodies**

Recommendation to restrict the movement of watercraft and other structures from entering or leaving Tiber or Canyon Ferry Reservoirs until ice over. This closure would limit the launch or removal of any boat, dock or other structure that could potentially transport veligers. No boat, dock or other structure should be removed from the area without contacting Fish, Wildlife and Parks to arrange for inspection.
- **Potential Control Actions**
  - The Command team has begun discussions on the possibility of drawdowns and set up a task force to look into the logistics and efficacy of a drawdown, though no decisions have been made at this time.
- **Information sharing and action**
  - Creation of Joint information Center for sharing information
  - Capacity to gather information from partners to inform decision-making
  - Clean, Drain, Dry continues to be the most important way for the public at large to help with this incident. We need everyone to adhere to these techniques no matter where they are in the state.

**For more information and the latest news on this issue:**

<http://dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/cadd/MISAC>

<http://dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/cadd/MISAC/zebra-and-quagga-mussel-facts-and-fact-sheet>

*For more information about MISAC and to access archives of this e-newsletter go to: <http://dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/cadd/MISAC>*

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